

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended, is respectfully requested.

By the present Preliminary Amendment the specification is amended to correct minor informalities and to make minor clarifications, that are not deemed to raise any issues of new matter.

Further, claims 1-16 are canceled without prejudice and new claims 17-29 are presented for examination. New claims 17-29 are deemed to be self-evident from the original disclosure, including the original claims, and thus are not deemed to raise any issues of new matter.

The present application is believed to be in condition for a full and thorough examination on the merits. An early and favorable consideration of the present application is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Customer Number

**22850**

Tel: (703) 413-3000

Fax: (703) 413 -2220  
(OSMMN 06/04)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gregory J. Maier  
Attorney of Record  
Registration No. 25,599  
Surinder Sachar  
Registration No. 34,423

GJM:SNS\pmt

I:\ATTY\SNS\283234US-PR.DOC